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PINOCCHIO
TAKES ITALY

La vita e bella. As expected, Roberto Benigni has thumbed his nose at all previous box-office records in Italy. According to Cinetel, which monitored 627 screens of the unprecedented 940-screen release, representing one-third of the country's total, Benigni's fairy tale *Pinocchio* earned a massive 7,021,422 euros (\$6.9 mil.) during its opening weekend. The previous record was held by *The Lord of the Rings*, which opened on 700 prints in January 2002, grossing 5,859,000 euros.

As part of the Oct. 11 launch, *Pinocchio* also celebrated its very own special opening near Milan at the Cinema Arcadia, with an appearance by the comedy duo I Fichi D'India, who play the Cat and the Fox in the film. With four all-THX auditoriums seating 220 each—Acqua, Aria, Fuoco e Terra, or Air, Water, Fire and Earth—Arcadia is not only the first purpose-built multiplex in Italy, but also the first to feature digital projection. The fifth house, aptly named Energia, seats 630 and presented the DLP *Pinocchio* on one of the largest Harkness Perlux screens in the world (measuring 30 by 16.5 meters, or 98 by 54 feet). The d-cinema equipment comprises of Barco's D-Cine Premiere on a Cinemeccanica console, the only THX-certified digital projector, along with a server from EVS and the Dolby DMA8 processor. *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* and *Attack of the Clones* were the first two digital presentations in a nationwide exclusive.

As an added attraction, projection booths in the Arcadia are all completely visible to moviegoers and everybody can check on the equipment to screen films in 35mm, 70mm and large-format 8/70mm, along with all three digital sound formats.